
Chapter 7

Intergovernmental Coordination

Comprehensive planning in Georgia depends heavily on coordination among local governments and other local, regional and state agencies. Local governments are autonomous when it comes to planning and land use decisions; however, these decisions can have a great impact on neighboring jurisdictions. For this reason mechanisms are needed to assist in coordination among governments.

One formal coordination mechanism already in place statewide is the provision for review of local governments' comprehensive plans by their regional development center. The regional review function helps identify potential conflicts between the plans of neighboring jurisdictions.

Another formal coordination mechanism established as part of Georgia's Growth Strategies program is the provision for review of Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs).

Both of these mechanisms help identify potential conflicts between communities or adverse impacts of the decisions of one local government on another.

This element provides an opportunity not only to inventory coordination mechanisms that are already in place, like the two named above, but also to identify new mechanisms that may be needed to ensure the successful implementation of the comprehensive plan.

In addition to neighboring local governments, there are many other entities whose plans and programs may affect the implementation of the comprehensive plan. A number of local or regional "special districts" or authorities may be operating within a local government's jurisdiction, such as school boards or water and sewer authorities.

These quasi-public entities have their own plans and make their own decisions on matters very crucial to the implementation of portions of the local comprehensive plan. A prime example is locating facilities, such as schools or infrastructure, that serve the residents and businesses of the community.

Where these facilities are located has a profound impact on the development of the community, which is one of the main topics dealt with in the comprehensive plan, particularly in the Land Use and Community Facilities and Services elements.

The Intergovernmental Coordination element is intended to identify points where additional coordination may be needed in order to plan for more orderly development that is consistent with the desires of the community.

7.1 Inventory of Existing Conditions

This section describes existing coordination mechanisms relating to the local governments, boards and authorities as well as state programs and activities:

7.1.1 Local Governments, Boards and Authorities

(a) Adjacent Local Governments:

To ensure that continued cooperation exists and that a line of communication is always open, local governments and independent authorities have an appointee at each local government unit to attend meetings held by local agencies. Since Long County and Ludowici are close-knit, the sharing of information is common.

The majority of times it is through informal means of communication until an official action is taken and recommended. The informal means are phone calls, faxes, or e-mails and formal means of communications are usually resolutions.

The city and the county have no formal planning agreements. The city does have a city council member appointed to attend county and local authorities meetings. The sole purpose of the contact is to represent the city's interest and to provide information to other entities.

Intergovernmental coordination is required in the following categories:

- ③ The City of Ludowici and Long County each contribute monies to Fire Protection Service Delivery Service. The City of Ludowici contributes \$100 monthly to the fund. Communication is usually informal, but formal letters of support and resolutions are sometimes used.
- ③ The City of Ludowici and Long County have a Library Service Delivery Strategy. The City of Ludowici pays the utilities. Most of the communications are informal.
- ③ The City of Ludowici and Long County have a Courts Service Delivery Strategy. The City of Ludowici provides Municipal Court services to its citizens. The Long County Superior Court system handles all felonies within the county. Most of the communications are informal.

(b) School Boards

Ludowici has an appointee assigned to attend meetings held by the Long County Board of Education. Local government units share information by e-mail, fax and phone. The local school board and local government entities have an informal agreement that calls for coordinated planning to ensure proper use of allotted resources.

(c) Independent Special Districts

No independent special districts or authorities exist in Long County or its respective municipalities at this time.

(d) Independent Development Authorities

One development authority exists in Long County: the Long County Industrial Authority. Communication between the city and the industrial authority is informal but still allows for effective utilization of resources.

In addition, the local government must also inventory other applicable related state programs and activities that are interrelated with the provisions of the local government's comprehensive plan. The purpose of such an inventory is to identify existing agreements, policies, initiatives, etc. that may/will have an effect on the options a local government may want to exercise as part of its comprehensive plan.

7.1.2 State and Regional Programs and Activities

(a) Service Delivery Strategy Law

The “Adjacent Local Governments” section lists SDS elements that are coordinated between local government units. The section “Summary of Land Use Agreements” summarizes the process to resolve disputes when the county disagrees with actions of the Ludowici City Council. The County Commission or its representative will review expansion of water and sewer into new areas of the county. When appropriate, the City of Ludowici will prepare an impact statement for review by the local government units.

(b) Governor’s Greenspace Program

Ludowici has no green space program.

(c) Coastal Management Program

The City of Ludowici does not provide a member to the Coastal Management Program. In 2005, Ludowici had no planned major federal projects, no plans to receive grants or participate in coastal environmental projects. The Coastal Management Program does not affect the Ludowici Comprehensive Plan at this time.

(d) Water Supply and/or Water Quality Protection Plans

Ludowici has adopted the following Part V Environment Ordinance: 1) Wetlands. The city does not have a Soil and Erosion specialist and must rely on the Natural Resources and Conservation Service to review all Land Disturbing Activity Permits.

(e) NPDES Storm Water Program

Ludowici is not required to have a NPDES Permit.

(f) Watershed Protection Plans

No public water supply watersheds exist in Long County.

(g) River Basin Management Plans

No river basins exist within the jurisdictional boundaries of Ludowici.

7.2 Assessment of Current and Future Needs

Ludowici and Long County must address issues or problems with existing coordination mechanisms and/or agreements when discovered.

7.2.1 Issues arising from growth and development

(a) Land use conflicts at jurisdictional borders

Ludowici and Long County have a mechanism in place to resolve land use conflicts (see section 7.1).

(b) Lack of information about the plans, policies, etc. of adjacent communities

Ludowici has an informal working relationship with Long County and other local governments. Communications and cooperation between local government units are excellent. The demonstrated goodwill between local governments rules out a need for formal communication mechanisms.

(c) Service provision conflicts or overlaps

The City and Long County have no services that overlap.

(d) Annexation issues between Ludowici and Long County

Ludowici and Long County have a mechanism in place to resolve annexation issues (see section 7.1).

7.2.2 Adequacy of Intergovernmental Coordination

The assessment revealed no specific problems or needs that would benefit from improved or additional intergovernmental coordination. Currently, the City and Long County use all available information to address development and needs within their respective jurisdictions. The Long County Board of Education coordinates with both local governments to ensure adequate use of resources.

7.2.3 Adequacy of Coordination on State Programs

Ludowici participates in state programs as described in section 7.1. The control mechanisms are formal and ensure compliance with both prescribed and non-prescribed programs.

7.3 Goal and Implementation

Goal 1

Expand intergovernmental relationships with local municipalities, state and federal governmental units and other units of government.

Objective 1.1

Develop policies, cooperative agreements and working relationships promoting intergovernmental cooperation, sharing of information and sharing of services with other governmental units.

Policy 1.1.1

Pursue intergovernmental cooperation when it is cost effective.

Policy 1.1.2

When appropriate and cost effective, promote the sharing of services.

Policy 1.1.3

Participate in committees, groups and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation.